



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Chief Administrative Officer
Director of Health Services
Director of Public Works
Interim Director of Internal Services
Fire Chief

At its meeting held August 19, 2003, the Board took the following action:

57-A

Supervisor Yaroslavsky made the following statement:

“On August 14, 2003, the northeastern United States experienced the largest power blackout in the nation’s history, an event that affected a region encompassing 50 million residents across six states and two Canadian provinces. The exact cause of the initial equipment failure that triggered the automatic shutdown of hundreds of interconnected energy facilities remains unknown at this time. Also unknown are the full economic implications, which have been compared to those of a major snowstorm: short-term disruption and some losses, most of which can and will soon be made up.

“Of greater concern than the transitory economic impact, however, is how the public health and safety infrastructure was affected during the blackout, how public safety, law enforcement, emergency services and communications links were disrupted, and what alternatives were available to the impacted government entities.

(Continued on Page 2)

57-A (Continued)

“As recently as 2001, regions of California were threatened with blackouts or brownouts during the State’s energy crisis. While the causes were different, the challenges were the same: how to protect and serve the public during a major power failure. The recent northeastern blackout once again compels us to ask this question with renewed urgency.”

Therefore, on motion of Supervisor Yaroslavsky, seconded by Supervisor Knabe, unanimously carried (Supervisor Molina being absent), the Chief Administrative Officer was instructed, in conjunction with the Directors of Health Services and Public Works, Interim Director of Internal Services, Sheriff and Fire Chief to report back to the Board within 30 days with an analysis of Los Angeles County's preparedness to respond to a power failure similar to the August 14, 2003 power blackout in the northeastern United States, and its ability to maintain continuous operation and public service for Los Angeles County's 10 million residents should a comparable event happen here.

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